

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5366

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0332

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, BY

SUBJECT: BURUNDI IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

REF: STATE 82479

1. IN ABSENCE OF ADEQUATE ARCHIVES AT POST, WE CANNOT SAY WHEN BURUNDI BECAME FORMALLY INVOLVED IN THE MACHINERY OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, BUT IT WAS REPRESENTED AT THE 1970 LUSAKA SUMMIT, PROBABLY BY PRESIDENT MICOMBERO, AND AT THE 1973 ALGIERS SUMMIT, CERTAINLY BY MICOMBERO. IT IS NOW ALSO ATTENDING LOWER LEVEL MEETINGS OF THE NON-ALIGNED, SUCH AS AT LIMA IN AUGUST 1975. IT IS NOT A VERY PROMINENT MEMBER AT PRESENT, BUT WOULD PROBABLY WELCOME APPOINTMENT TO ANY COMMITTEES, SECRETARIAT, OR BETWEEN-SUMMIT COORDINATING BODIES. IT GOES ALONG WITH THE NON-ALIGNED CONSENSUS, INCLINING TO THE MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS.

2. BURUNDI BELONGS TO THE NON-ALIGNED GROUPING MAINLY BECAUSE IT IS THE THING TO DO IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. FOR A SMALL AFRICAN COUNTRY, THE GROUPING IS NOT AS IMPORTANT AS THE OAU OR THE UN, BUT IT IS A USEFUL MECHANISM OF LIKE-MINDED STATES WORLDWIDE FOR BRINGING PRESSURE ON THE INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS ON ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISSUES. IT IMPOSES NO OBLIGATIONS ON BURUNDI, BUT ALLOWS IT TO PRESERVE AN IMAGE OF "PROGRESSIVISM" IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, WHILE PURSUING CAUTIOUS AND CONSERVATIVE POLICIES AT HOME.

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3. BURUNDI'S MAIN FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS ARE (A) TO KEEP ITS THREE NEIGHBORS FRIENDLY, OR, IF THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE, THEN AT LEAST NEUTRALIZED, SO THAT NONE WILL BE TEMPTED TO INTERFERE IN BURUNDI'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS WITH THE IDEA OF ENCOURAGING THE 85 PERCENT HUTU MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION TO SIEZE POWER FROM THE RULING 14 PERCENT TUTSI MINORITY;

(B) TO ENSURE THE CONTINUOUS AND EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF THE TRANSPORTATION LIFELINE ACROSS TANZANIA TO AND FROM DAR ES SALAAM;

(C) TO GET SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER ECONOMIC SUPPORT AND RESOURCES FROM THE ADVANCED COUNTRIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BURUNDI IN WAYS OF THE LEADERSHIP'S CHOOSING;

(D) TO GAIN WHATEVER BENEFITS ARE POSSIBLE FROM SUCH IMPROVED ECONOMIC TERMS AS THE LDC'S MANAGE TO EXTRACT FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES;

(E) TO DO WHATEVER IS POSSIBLE TO SPEED THE LIBERATION OF BLACKS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA FROM WHITE RULE.

4. ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO BURUNDI ARE RATHER FEW. IT WANTS THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE TO GRANT CONCRETE AND MAJOR CONCESSIONS TO LANDLOCKED NATIONS. IT SEEKS SOLIDARITY WITH OTHER LDC'S IN INDUCING DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO TAKE ACTIONS TO INCREASE THE LDC SHARE OF THE WORLD'S GROSS GLOBAL PRODUCT, INCLUDING EXPORT EARNINGS GUARANTEES (IN BURUNDI'S CASE, FOR COFFEE), EASY AND CHEAP INTERNATIONAL CREDITS (MAINLY FOR MINERALS EXPLOITATION), AND EXPANDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. IT JOINS WITH ALMOST ALL OTHER BLACK AFRICANS IN SEEKING THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE END OF WHITE RULE OVER RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA, AND THE START OF CHANGES TOWARD RAPID BLACK EQUALITY IN SOUTH AFRICA. FINALLY, IT WISHES TO MAINTAIN OAU SOLIDARITY FOR SENTIMENTAL REASONS AS WELL AS FOR THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF ENHANCING THE POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF GENERALLY POOR AND WEAK AFRICAN NATIONS BEYOND WHAT EACH COULD ACHIEVE ON ITS OWN.

5. ON ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THE U.S., BURUNDI IS ALMOST ALWAYS ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE. IT IS FIRMLY ALIGNED WITH NORTH KOREA AND WILL INVARIABLY STICK WITH THE ARABS ON MIDDLE EAST

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ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS. IT DID ASSAIL THE SOVIET MOVES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1968, BUT, IN RECENT YEARS, ITS STANDS HAVE BEEN ANTI-U.S. IN VIETNAM, CAMBODIA, ANGOLA, OPEC ISSUES, ETC. IT HAS NOT YET COMMITTED ITSELF ON PUERTO RICO, BUT ITS VOTES TO APPROVE THE OVERALL RESOLUTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE OF 24 AT THE 1975 UNGA ON AMERICAN DEPENDENT TERRITORIES, ITS BUDDING FRIENDSHIP WITH CUBA, AND ITS SUPPORT OF THE CONSENSUS RESOLUTION (INCLUDING A SWIPE AT U.S. SOVEREIGNTY OVER PUERTO

RICO) AT THE 1975 LIMA NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE ALL MAKE IT LIKELY THAT IT WILL OPPOSE THE STATUS QUO WHICH WE BACK. AT BEST, BURUNDI MIGHT ABSTAIN ON RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR PUERTO RICO'S LIBERATION, BUT EVEN THIS IS PROBLEMATIC, IF THE OAU RADICALS TAKE A STRONG ANTI-AMERICAN STAND ON PUERTO RICO.

6. NOTHING IN THE EMBASSY'S RECORDS INDICATES ANY PAST SUCCESS IN INDUCING BURUNDI TO MODIFY ITS POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS IN WAYS TO FAVOR USG INTERESTS. WITH THE START OF A BILATERAL AID PROGRAM, IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT BURUNDI MIGHT BE BROUGHT TO A NEUTRAL POSITION ON ONE OR TWO ISSUES OF IMMEDIATE AND DIRECT INTEREST TO THE U.S. (SUCH AS PUERTO RICO). THERE WILL BE NO CHANCE, HOWEVER, OF CHANGING BURUNDI'S STAND ON ITS COMMITMENTS ELSEWHERE (TO NORTH KOREA, ARAB INTERESTS, AND NIEO).

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